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COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN

Eleventh session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 204th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 29 January 1992, at 6.30 p.m.

Chairperson: Ms. TALLAWY

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The meeting was called to order at 6.40 p.m.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE (continued)

Report of Working Group I (continued) (CEDAW/C/WG.I/1992/WP.3)

1. The CHAIRPERSON said that, since the Committee had decided to redraft the recommendations concerning the World Conference on Human Rights set out in the report of Working Group I (section 4), Ms. Bernard had prepared the following text:

"The members of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women suggest that the Secretary-General of the United Nations take steps to initiate the translation of the Manual on human rights reporting prepared by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research and the Centre for Human Rights into all official United Nations languages as soon as possible, and distribute it to all States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

The Committee requests that, as part of the preparation for the World Conference on Human Rights, the Secretary-General prepare a study of the work of the Committee to date. Such a study should include an examination of individual articles of the Convention as well as the Committee's general recommendations and examine ways and means of improving the work of the Committee.

The Committee requests that the Secretary-General ensure that, as far as possible, any background documentation prepared by the Secretariat in connection with the Conference includes an analysis of the implications of women's human rights on the issues addressed in the documentation.

The members of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women request that the question of the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms by women be fully reflected in the agenda of the Conference, and, in particular, that the agenda include one or more of the following items:

(a) The close relationship between the rights guaranteed by the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the rights protected by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international instruments. Such a theme would emphasize that women's equality is a significant human rights issue;

(b) The manner in which all forms of violence against women infringe international human rights norms and impair women's full enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms, e.g.:

(The Chairperson)

(i) The right to life;

(ii) The right not to be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment;

(iii) The right to liberty and security of person;

(iv) The right to equality in the family;

(v) The right to health;

(vi) The right to just and favourable conditions of employment."

2. A paragraph along the lines of the existing subparagraph suggesting the preparation of a publication on the Convention and the Committee's work comparable with the Human Rights Fact Sheets of the Centre for Human Rights could also be included.

3. Ms. GONZALEZ MARTINEZ said that the reference in the third paragraph to "any background documentation" was too broad and might not be properly interpreted. It would be better to refer to General Assembly resolution 46/116.

4. Ms. BERNARD suggested that the relevant paragraph should read:

"The Committee requests that the Secretary-General ensure that, as far as possible, documentation prepared for the World Conference on Human Rights according to General Assembly resolution 46/116, paragraph 4 (V) (a) includes a gender perspective."

5. Ms. EVATT said that the fourth paragraph should refer to the "equal" enjoyment of human rights in line with the wording of the Convention.

6. Ms. GONZALEZ MARTINEZ said that subparagraph (b) of the fourth paragraph was too detailed and referred to human rights which were rights of people in general, not just of women. The list of rights at the end of subparagraph (b) should be deleted, and the remaining three major components of the paragraph should be redrafted so that they merged.

7. The CHAIRPERSON agreed that the Committee should not suggest that the World Conference set priorities among women's rights since all rights under the Convention were equally important. The main issue was that women's rights were human rights and that the World Conference in its deliberations and documentation should not overlook the gender perspective.

8. Ms. OESER said that the Committee should not refer to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in the fourth paragraph since the Universal Declaration was not legally binding and was not as specific as the Convention.

9. Ms. ILIC said that the phrase in question could be redrafted so that it read: "the rights guaranteed under the other international human rights instruments".

10. Ms. EVATT proposed that a new paragraph should be added referring to paragraph 1 (c) and (d) of General Assembly resolution 45/155.

11. Ms. GONZALEZ MARTINEZ and Ms. BERNARD proposed that the new paragraph should read:

> "Such a theme would emphasize that women's equality is a significant human rights issue and, to this end, attention should be given to the extent to which this issue has been addressed effectively by the implementation methods and mechanisms under human rights covenants and conventions."

12. The CHAIRPERSON suggested that section 4 of the report of Working Group I should be redrafted along the following lines:

"Suggestion 3

World Conference on Human Rights 1993

The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women requests that the question of the equal enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms by women be fully reflected in the agenda of the Conference and, in particular, the close relationship between the rights guaranteed by the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and those guaranteed under the other international human rights instruments.

Such a theme would emphasize that women's equality is a significant human rights issue and, to this end, attention should be given to the extent to which this issue has been addressed effectively by the implementation methods and mechanisms under human rights covenants and conventions.

The Committee requests that the Secretary-General ensure that, as far as possible, documentation prepared for the World Conference on Human Rights according to General Assembly resolution 46/116, paragraph 4 (V) (a) includes a gender perspective.

The Committee suggests that the Secretary-General of the United Nations take steps to initiate the translation of the Manual on human rights reporting prepared by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research and the Centre for Human Rights into all official United Nations languages as soon as possible, and distribute it to all States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

(The Chairperson)

The Committee suggests that the Secretary-General prepare a publication on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the work of the Committee like the fact sheets for other human rights instruments and bodies."

13. If she heard no objection, she would take it that the Committee wished to adopt the text of suggestion 3 just read out.

14. It was so decided.

15. The report of Working Group I, as amended, was adopted.

The meeting rose at 8 p.m.